

SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER

Approved: July 2016

FLSA: Non-exempt

Unit: SEIU



Definition
Under general supervision, plans, schedules, directs, assigns, and participates in the work of staff responsible for receiving police and emergency calls and dispatching Police units following prescribed procedures; coordinates assigned projects and programs; provides technical support for assigned technology systems; answers non-emergency calls for public safety and other City departments; performs a variety of general administrative support duties; and performs related work as required.
Supervision received and exercised
Receives general supervision from the Communications and Records Manager. Exercises technical and functional direction to communications dispatch staff.
Class characteristics
This is the lead-level class in the communications dispatcher classification series responsible for performing the full range of receiving and dispatching emergency and non-emergency calls, as well as coordinating assigned projects and programs and providing support for dispatch systems and technology. In addition, incumbents provide technical and functional direction to and scheduling for assigned staff. This class is distinguished from the Technical Services Manager in that the latter has management responsibility for communications and records management operations and related programs of the Police Department.
Examples of typical job functions (illustrative only)
Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plans, schedules, prioritizes, assigns, and participates in the work of emergency dispatch staff; develops schedules, approves or denies time off requests, and communicates status of activities to appropriate personnel, working cooperatively to schedule assignments in accordance with established and special operational priorities.• Inspects and evaluates work in progress and upon completion to assure that call taking and dispatch activities are performed in accordance with departmental procedures and policies and legal requirements; develops and, upon approval, implements departmental policies and procedures.• Monitors quality and ensures all calls are answered and dispatched in accordance with established standards; identifies opportunities for improving service delivery methods and procedures; provides recommendations concerning process changes and shift staffing levels; reviews with the Technical Services Manager; implements changes and improvements after approval.• On a quarterly basis, sets up communications dispatch shift schedules in accordance with bidding rules and procedures; tracks staff attendance and reviews staff timesheets; on a continuous basis, makes changes, additions, and corrections to scheduling system and generates reports as needed.• Oversees the department's communications dispatch training program; sets training schedules and assigns Communications Training Dispatchers; reviews trainee progress evaluations, approves trainee's progression through the program, and discusses performance issues with the Technical Services Manager; ensures Communications Training Dispatchers follow training guidelines; creates and updates training manuals; implements training procedures and standards; maintains training records; schedules mandatory and elective training for all dispatch staff.• Participates in the work of assigned staff responsible for receiving and evaluating police and emergency calls and calls for City service; provides information, dispatches calls to field staff, and/or transfers calls to the appropriate department, agency, or response organization.• Dispatches public safety emergency units in accordance with established procedures and policies using a computerized dispatch system, including determining priority of emergency and contacting and sending appropriate response unit.• Maintains contact with field units, including accounting for location and status of units, recording status in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, and maintaining records of field calls; sends backup units, as necessary, ensuring the safety of field units.• Maintains tape recordings of communications; provides copies of recordings as requested; provides courtroom testimony as communications custodian of records.• Plans, organizes and coordinates community outreach programs, including conducting tours and off-site presentations and facilitating classes on communications dispatch and departmental services.• Processes alarm billing payments and invoices; issues permits; updates database; handles complaints or disputes.

- Prepares, maintains, and uploads the press log and press releases to the Department's website.
- Oversees upgrades, repairs, and implementation of and participates in the operation of computers, telephone, and radio console and telecommunication equipment; acts as system administrator for assigned technology systems and software including creating users, setting passwords and security, and creating training manuals.
- Oversees and participates in entering, updating, and retrieving a variety of records and information from criminal justice databases; evaluates urgency of requests and responds accordingly.
- Accesses federal, state, and local law enforcement information databases to obtain information.
- Acts as a liaison to the public and representatives of other agencies for the department; provides initial non-emergency contact to individuals requesting police records or related services; determines the nature of the contact; provides factual information which requires a knowledge of legal guidelines, departmental policies and procedures, and the use of tact and discretion, or directs callers and visitors to the proper staff contact or agency.
- Utilizes various community outreach and social media tools and technology to notify and keep residents informed of police activities, services and programs.
- Compiles data and prepares and presents records, reports and other necessary correspondence; ensures the proper documentation of activities.
- Monitors changes in regulations and technology that may affect operations; recommends and implements changes after approval.
- Attends necessary training, meetings and shift briefing sessions.
- Participates in drills and test scenarios to prepare for unexpected emergencies.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Knowledge of

- Basic principles of supervision and training.
- Functions, principles, and practices of law enforcement agencies.
- Terminology and procedures used in public safety dispatching.
- Operation of computer-aided dispatching and telecommunications equipment.
- Local, state and federal law enforcement databases.
- City and County geography, maps, streets, landmarks and driving directions.
- Social media tools and technology used in communicating with the public.
- Methods and techniques of developing training materials.
- Applicable federal, state and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Principles and practices of data collection and report preparation.
- Business arithmetic and basic statistical techniques.
- Basic principles of record keeping.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors and City staff.

Ability to

- Plan, schedule, assign, and oversee activities of communications dispatch personnel.
- Inspect the work of others and maintain established quality control standards.
- Identify and implement effective course of action to complete assigned work.
- Oversee and participate in communications dispatch related projects.
- Assess and prioritize emergency situations while remaining calm and using sound, independent judgment.
- Memorize codes, names, street locations and other information.
- Read and interpret maps and other pertinent documentation.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state and local policies, procedures, laws and regulations.
- Attend to multiple activities simultaneously.
- Obtain necessary information from individuals in stressful or emergency situations.
- Compile and summarize information to prepare accurate, clear and concise reports.
- Perform technical, detailed and responsible office support work.
- Organize, maintain, and update office database and records systems.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy.

- Organize own work, set priorities and meet critical deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and software programs.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone and in writing.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and experience

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

- Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth (12th) grade.
- Three (3) years of call taking and dispatching experience comparable to the communications training dispatcher at the City.

Licenses and certifications

- Possession a valid Public Safety Dispatcher Basic Certificate issued by the California State Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.).

Physical demands

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone and dispatch systems. This is primarily a sedentary office classification required to sit for prolonged period of times although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds.

Environmental elements

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.